

## Testimony of Representative Shanelle Jackson

### *Before The*

### **MI House Local, Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs Committee**

*December 8, 2011 / 9 a.m. / 307 House Office Building / Lansing, MI 48933*

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Chairman Ouimet; ... Republican Vice-Chair Pettalia; ... Democratic Vice-Chair Stanley; ... Distinguished colleagues on the House Local, Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs Committee.

Good morning. For the record, my name is Shanelle Jackson. I represent Michigan's 9<sup>th</sup> state House district on the Northwest side of the proud City of Detroit.

Joining me at the table this morning is City of Detroit Government Affairs Director Kizzi Montgomery and City of Detroit state lobbyist Kenneth Cole.

Also present this morning are several of my constituents from the Grandmont-Rosedale Development Corporation – a non-profit community organization encompassing Rosedale, North Rosedale, Grandmont and Minock subdivisions.

I first want to publicly thank these pillars of the Detroit community for making time to travel to Lansing today to support my House Bill 4874. I ask committee members to warmly welcome them to their state Capitol.

I know time is limited, so I will get right to my brief remarks on House Bill 4874, which became necessary when Detroit's population fell below 750,000, according to the 2010 Census.

Current Michigan law permits a city with a population of 750,000 or more to provide by ordinance a procedure for residents in desiring neighborhoods to assess themselves for snow removal, mosquito abatement and private security services. The *substitute* before you would lower to 600,000 the population threshold for a city to so act.

Detroit – under both current law and the proposed one – is the only city in the state to meet this criterion. Thus, House Bill 4874 *only affects Michigan's largest municipality*. And it's important to note that Detroit – despite its population loss from 2000 to 2010 – remains Michigan's largest city by a lot. (SEE ATTACHMENT)

The urgency of this legislation to Detroit is manifold.

It's no secret that my beloved city is facing Herculean financial challenges. Simply put, city revenues are limited and, at present, not keeping pace with service demands.

Detroit is blessed, however, to have residents, like those in the aforementioned subdivisions, who truly love their city and are willing to sacrifice even more for reliable snow removal and security in their neighborhoods. Their commendable civic pride allows city leaders to deploy limited resources for such services elsewhere in our sprawling municipality.

On behalf of them, I thank committee members for considering passing this *substitute* for House Bill 4874 to allow continuation of these voluntary assessments.

I would be remiss, however, if I did not encourage this panel to also consider reporting House Bill 4874 *as introduced* on July 27<sup>th</sup>. That version of the bill also sought to lower to 600,000 from 750,000 the population for a city to be allowed to *issue bonds* upon resolution of its governing body.

Here, too, the law *only affects the City of Detroit*, which, again, requires tools like this to help stabilize its finances, now more than ever.

Respectfully, I've often heard colleagues on both sides of the aisle say during my five years here: "I want to help Detroit." Well, here is a chance to do that.

In the spirit of legislative collegiality, I urge you to vote "Yes" on House Bill 4874 – ideally for the legislation as introduced.

Thanks, again, for your consideration and forbearance. We are happy to entertain any questions members may have.

### **Michigan's 20 Most Populous Cities**

1.	Detroit	713,777
2.	Grand Rapids	188,040
3.	Warren	134,056
4.	Sterling Heights	129,699
5.	Lansing	114,297
6.	Ann Arbor	113,934
7.	Flint	102,434
8.	Dearborn	98,153
9.	Livonia	96,942
10.	Westland	84,094
11.	Troy	80,980
12.	Farmington Hills	79,740
13.	Kalamazoo	74,262
14.	Wyoming	72,125
15.	Southfield	71,739
16.	Rochester Hills	70,995
17.	Taylor	63,131
18.	St. Clair Shores	59,715
19.	Pontiac	59,515
20.	Dearborn Heights	57,774

*Source: 2010 U.S. Census*